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ABSTRACT

A critical issue at the turn of the century was the women's role in urban America. According to numerous "experts" of that time, the very future of the nation depended upon the successful resolution of this "woman problem." The family was in a state of decline and the falling white Anglo-Saxon Protestant birth rate was considered tantamount to "race suicide." Sociologists, home economists, and educators saw the "science of consumption" as a solution to the "woman problem." However, this inclusion of domestic science into the high school curriculum could be viewed as being linked to a broader movement toward differentiation by race, social class, and gender, as well as to broader fears of "race suicide" and discussions of "woman's place" in the new industrial order. Teaching the principles of home economics could have also been viewed as an attempt at that time to curb labor unrest. If women were taught to run a household "scientifically," man's wages presumably would be sufficient to cover the cost of operating a home. This would reduce tendencies toward demands from labor and ultimately maximize profit for the corporate capitalists. In addition to combatting "race suicide," solving the "woman problem" would allow for the growth of American capitalism. (JH)

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"Housewifery" in the High School:

The Quest for Social Control, 1905-1915

Paper Presented at the Meetings of the
American Educational Research Association

April 8-12, 1979

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In 1898, Ellen Richards, Professor of Sanitary Chemistry at MIT, delivered a valiant speech to the NEA advocating the study of domestic science in high school. "The home," argued Richards, "is still an individualistic industry protected from competition, hedged about by tradition, and nearly smothered by the dust from the wheels of progress now far ahead; it seems to be no longer the center of enjoyment for the products of wealth, because the woman has lost her grip...in her struggle to become an active producer, she has lost sight of the science of consumption."[1] This, states Richards, is most unfortunate since it is only the woman who can "transfer the crude products of the factory and workshop into things of joy."[2] Why, she asks, have women "allowed all the arts relating to house and home to pass from their hands into those of the hotel clerk and the janitor of the apartment house? Why do they buy fabrics, furniture, and utensils on the recommendation of the salesman at the bargain counter, and not because of their intrinsic value?"[3] The fault, she suggests, is in the "school education, which has taken no account of the value of the constructive arts as a stimulus to original thought; which has neglected to cultivate that sense of power over things and over environment which the study of arithmetic does not seem to give to girls."[4]

The NEA response to Richards was negative. Perla G. Bowman of Ohio State University more accurately reflects the tone of the times. She argues that education "means an all-around development, the perfection of body, mind and soul. The proper care of humanity is beneath the notice of no one. A strong and attractive body and a charming personality are among the greatest of gifts and can be retained only by a knowledge of the laws of health and obedience to them."[5] To be successful, however, the training must go "hand in hand with the sciences, languages and arts. What could be more reasonable than that the study of art should lead one,

not only to the appreciation of master paintings, sculpture, carving and architecture, but also to the masterful creation of beautiful homes, gowns and other material surroundings?"[6]

Most late nineteenth century educators did not view schools as vehicles for systematic preparation in domesticity. A survey of subject offerings in forty high schools in 1892, for example, suggests that no specific instruction in domestic economy was taking place.[7] By 1924, a similar survey conducted in fifteen cities shows that all high schools were offering courses in home economics.[8] The question is, what are the factors that contributed to the inclusion of home economics in the high school curriculum? Why was Richards largely ignored in 1898 and hailed as a heroine by 1907? Who supported the inclusion of domestic science in the high school curriculum, and why?

This paper attempts to answer these questions by tracing and analyzing the rhetoric of the period. Two main sources provide the bases for analysis: 1) Proceedings of the National Education Association meetings from 1900 to 1915; and 2) Proceedings of the American Sociological Society meetings (ASS) during this same time period. I selected 1900-1915 since this is the time that home economics attained legitimate subject matter status in the schools. I selected the NEA and ASS for analysis since these associations provided the main national forum for debate on both curricular issues and the family. This paper examines only the rhetoric of inclusion. Future studies must assess the extent to which national rhetoric is reproduced and has impact on the local level. This piece offers hypotheses which may be tested in particular local contexts.

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Education at the Turn of the Century

The period 1880 to 1920 saw the emergence of modern industrial America. It was during these years that the United States became a leading industrial power, and replaced a parochial and fragmented economy with highly integrated national structures increasingly dominated by large corporate enterprises.[9] The nineteenth century society of island communities dominated by small town values was eroded and replaced by "modern" America with its values of "continuity and regularity, functionality and rationality, administration and management."[10] In the words of Handlin, "the dictatorship of the clock and schedule became absolute."[11]

Although some welcomed the new order, many late nineteenth century reformers believed that a prior social harmony had been rudely destroyed, and they expected schools to preserve the social and moral fabric that they assumed existed during an earlier period. Schools were expected to imbue youngsters with a common set of moral principles, thus ensuring that urban America would possess a cohesive set of attitudes and values.[12]

Although the charge that the schools should perform this task was not new (Horace Mann argued similarly sixty years earlier), the specific curricular recommendations were. The call was for manual training, or "education for the hand," which was to teach youngsters of all social classes the principles underlying work, thus averting ethnic and class dissension in industrial America.[13] Manual training was aimed at both boys and girls, and its goal was to inculcate a common set of norms rather than prepare individuals for specific vocational goals. The push was for communality of educational experience rather than rigid differentiation based upon "objective" criteria such as race, sex, or social class. Richards' notion of a curriculum aimed specifically at preparing women for

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their future roles as wives and mothers was clearly out of place. Although cooking and sewing were part of the larger manual training movement, they were treated as an integral part of every girl's liberal arts education. Public school educators did not take seriously the notion that curriculum for girls should be defined in terms of future home-making.[14] The doctrines of secondary education during this period did not break sharply from those of the past. Although the classics were being less stressed, and the "modern" subjects such as English more stressed, both groups of subjects were considered appropriate for pupils of all social classes and vocational destinations.[15] Indeed, the NEA sponsored Committee of Ten took an explicit stand against differentiation in the high school by social class or gender.[16]

The push for commonality however, was not to last. Educators became increasingly concerned that schools were not preventing social conflict. Additionally, the turn of the century found more and more young people attending secondary school, and new schools appeared at an average rate of 316 per year.[17] Immigration was on the rise, and slums were expanding. Industrialists were fearful of labor unrest, and "good stock" Americans were fearful of immigrant immorality and vice. It was a time of change, and the schools were expected to change with the times.

The Rise of Vocational Education

In 1905, Katherine Dopp of the University of Chicago Extension Division suggested to the NEA that "a course in mechanics...would be of genuine interest and value to both boys and girls."[18] "Even in our great educational institutions," she argues, "there is not sufficient recognition of the fact that technical skill should be organically related to the elements of a liberal culture."[19] Sympathetic to the manual training movement, she pointed out that an education which gives one class a "conceit of knowledge

and distaste for honest work and another class mere skill without the enlightenment of ideas will tend to widen the chasm and increase the hostility between social classes."[20] This was one of the last such statements to be made before the NEA. By 1905, Dopp was dismissed as "conservative" and merely academic.

The late nineteenth century optimism that schools could reshape the urban environment did not last: school personnel began to move away from the idea of using the school to effect large-scale social change and toward the idea of fitting individuals into the new industrial order.[21] Educators argued for vocational or industrial education rather than manual training. Their goal was to prepare individuals for pre-determined slots in the corporate economy. As Lazerson notes, the first five years of the twentieth century saw an ideological shift "from the principles of work to the learning of trades."[22] Rejecting the social reconstruction goals of the late nineteenth century, reformers argued that schools should accept the corporate state and work to inculcate the skills, attitudes and values that would allow individuals to fill their pre-determined roles.

The 1906 report of the Massachusetts Commission on Industrial and Technical Education (otherwise known as the Douglas Commission), and the accompanying Kingsbury investigation, effectively closed the "principles of work" era and launched the period which focused on preparing pupils for life. Stressing the linkage between schools and the economy, the report began as follows: "Men and women who have been brought into intimate contact with the harder side of life as it appears among the poorer people of the cities think they see in some form of industrial education a means of securing earlier and greater efficiency as wage earners, more self-reliance and self-respect, steadier habits of industry and frugality, and through these the opening of avenues to better industrial and social conditions."[23]

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Since schools were not preparing individuals for specific industrial ends, continued the report, neither the children who left school early or those who finished high school were equipped with any useful skills. Because of this, industries had to rely on haphazard in-shop training, the consequences of which were increased production costs, limited output and lower quality. This necessarily weakened the position of American industry in competition for world markets.[24]

The Douglas Commission concluded that the public schools were not meeting their obligations in modern industrial society. Manual education was not the solution to this problem since it was promoted as a "cultural subject...without reference to any industrial end."[25] The Commission called for the establishment of independent industrial schools, or for the introduction of day and evening courses in public high schools.[26] Whether industrial education should be taught in separate vocational schools or integrated into the comprehensive high school was a battle bitterly fought for many years. Suffice it to say that by 1910 the issue was essentially dead. Educators feared that separate vocational schools would foster class antagonism, and the comprehensive high school which allowed the mixing of pupils from all social backgrounds was heartily endorsed by the end of the first decade.[27]

The Douglas Commission precipitated the acceptance of domestic science curriculum along the lines outlined by Richards. By arguing that the school must prepare for life and thus future vocational destinations, the report sanctioned special courses of study for girls preparing to be housewives. This was the first time that schools at all levels were called upon to fashion individuals for their future roles in the economy. Given the drive for "relevancy", educators advocated the inclusion of domestic science in the high schools. As one observer put it, the sudden and widespread demand for industrial and domestic science courses in schools was

"a mental epidemic, much like the free-silver crusade and the Klondike gold rush."[28]

Equality of Educational Opportunity

The push for vocational education was closely tied with the changing nature of "equality of educational opportunity." Shortly after the report was issued, Jesse D. Burks of the Teachers Training School in Albany stated that the "last years of the elementary school do not pay; that the opportunities of those years are of no direct value to children destined for industrial and domestic pursuits."[29] "Much of the ill adaptation of our educational organizations to the actual needs of society," continued Burks, "is due to a false notion of democracy as applied to education. We very properly maintain that a true social and political democracy must rest upon equality of educational opportunity for all."[30] Unfortunately, we proceed to interpret "equal opportunity to mean the same opportunity and the mischief is done. We are failing in our educational policy to appreciate the fact that genuine opportunity consists not in what is offered to all alike, but in what actually serves the concrete purposes of any individual concerned."[31] Burks sums up this drive for the re-definition of familiar concepts by arguing that "we should substitute the more concrete and sane idea of furnishing educational opportunities adapted to the needs of various groups of children for the presently abstract and mis-leading notion" of equal educational opportunity. If this were done, he suggests, "we might develop a system of education that would be actually and not nominally democratic."[32]

Such statements were numerous after 1906. It became undemocratic to give all children the same type of schooling, and steps were taken to adapt education to the "needs" of specific groups: girls were one such group, and the "masses" another. This, combined with the notion that

education should "prepare for life," made differentiation by social class, race and sex a reality in American schools.[33]

The state of psychology insured that differentiation and specialization would predominate. The theory of "mental discipline" which underlie the nineteenth century call for manual education was challenged by Thorndike's theory of the non-transference of knowledge. Burks used this argument in his demand for early differentiation. "Mental growth," he argued, "consists in the development of a multitude of specific forms of reactions rather than of a few general facilities such as memory, judgement, and reasoning power... As an individual mind can be expected to develop only a very small number of the innumerable reactions possible at any given stage of its growth, the problem of education becomes in large measure the problem of providing situations favorable to the selection by each child of the reactions best suited to his needs."[34] Once mental discipline was discredited, the path was cleared for persons like Ellen Richards who had been largely ignored by the educational community only seven years earlier.

The Triumph of Vocational Education

By 1908 vocational education reigned supreme. "We are beseiged," wrote the State Superintendent of New Hampshire, "with public documents, monographs, magazine articles, reports of investigations too numerous to mention, etc., etc."[35] So far as educators were concerned, vocational education set the parameters of the debate.

Interpretations of this period seldom focus on the education of girls. As I pointed out, calls for domestic science and industrial training were products of the same call for "relevance" in education. At the fiftieth anniversity of the NEA in 1907, Anna J. Hamilton, principal of the Semple Collegiate School in Louisville presented what was fast becoming the dominant

notion regarding women's education. Pointing out that "the demands upon women have become varied," Hamilton argues that "we certainly cannot, with any show of justice or reason, suppose that natural instinct is sufficient" to prepare women for their proper place in our complex society. "Public opinion," she continued, "is trying to awaken school authorities to the fact that their powers and their school funds are not being used to the best advantage economically," that "our schools are not adjusting their work closely enough to the trend of the time," and that there is "further need of school division along technical lines."[36] One aspect of this differentiation must be a separate education for homemakers. "Everywhere," she argues, "educators are coming to a relaization that there must be a differentiation at some point in the training given to boys and girls...By training along domestic lines in all the phases of cooking, sewing and housekeeping, might we not somewhat check the tendency toward shop and factory by giving the girl a sense of power and capability in the home arts?"[37] Hamilton concluded her talk with a metaphor that would soon ring through NEA halls: "It is in our power as educators to develop from the raw material in our schools a product that will have in embryo this mother-element, which in the following of its natural instinct will create a higher type of home and society."[38]

Although its proponents were weighted heavily toward preparing women for the home, the vocational ideology contained an inherent contradiction. Now that the school was called upon to prepare girls for life, what was the nature of a woman's life? On the one hand, great numbers of women were assuming positions as unskilled laborers in industrial organizations. Why not prepare girls as laborers in the same way that boys were being prepared to be machine operators or pig-iron handlers? Too, many women became teachers or professionals. Why not prepare girls for these occupations

in the same way that boys were receiving such preparation? How and why did "women" emerge as a clear curriculum category, and why did the curriculum for girls take the form that it did? With vocational education, educators were faced with a clear choice: do they prepare women for paid industrial and commercial employment, or unpaid housekeeping? The proponents of vocational education recognized this potential contradiction, but for the most part left it to the local communities to untangle.[39] It would take the later advocates of social control to assess the relative merits of paid and unpaid labor for women.

Domestic Science and the Ideology of Control

Vocational education was not enough. Educators soon demanded an explicit social mission for the schools and numerous proposals were put forth. Judging from the NEA debates, it was the high school which was the bastion of conservatism and most greatly in need of re-organization.[40]

The demands for change generally took one of two forms: education for social service or education for social control. They soon merged into one grand slogan--education for social efficiency.[41] Although efficiency soon became the watchword in education, the distinction between control and service is analytically useful. Education for social control demanded the conscious inculcation of attitudes and values in order to subordinate all individual behavior to the goals of the state. The state was reified and all activities within the high school had to be justified in terms of social need. It was the school's responsibility to determine the future role of each individual and to inculcate the appropriate attitudes and skills. In varying degrees, the social controllers took the position that the only purpose of education was to prime the individual for ultimate service and allegiance to the nation. Edward A. Ross, Albion Small, David Snedden, and Charles Ellwood were some of its major proponentr.[42]

The other strand of "social efficiency" was social service. Dewey and Samuel Dutton portrayed the school more as an agency of service than an agency of control.[43] Dewey, for example, pictured the classroom as a community in which the child would be provided with the "instruments of effective self-direction" to bring about a "worthy, lovely and harmonious" nation.[44] Proponents of social service conceived of the school more as a servant of the community than as an "economical system of police."[45] Although some of the support for domestic science came from the proponents of service, its most vociferous backers were clearly on the side of control. Most demanded that schools prepare individuals for their future roles as garbage collectors, machine operators or housewives. For most of these individuals, the very future of the race was dependent upon the resolution of what became known as the "women question" or the "woman problem."[46] The inclusion of housewifery in the high school was perceived as a way to solve this issue once and for all. Not surprisingly, sociologists were in the forefront of the domestic science debate. Given their emerging roles as "experts" on the family, their position on the "woman question" is critical. It is to this issue that I now turn.

The Views of the Sociologists[47]

In 1909 the American Sociological Association held its first systematic meeting on the American family. Rising divorce rates, "hordes" of unskilled immigrants, and increased numbers of working mothers rendered the situation "serious," and the "experts" set out to analyze the problem and offer solutions.

The proceedings of this meeting underscore the social control tone of the conference. In one of the first sessions, Dr. Prince Morrow told the audience that "the welfare of the family underlies the welfare of

society. Whatever injuriously affects this unit of our social organization reacts unfavorably upon the collective social body." At a later point, Morrow stated that "children are the only excuse for marriage"--not merely offspring, but "children born in conditions of vitality, health, and physical vigor; capable of <u>becoming useful citizens</u> to the state."[48]

Morrow's statement encapsulates the tone of the conference. In order to have a healthy society, argued many of the sociologists, it is necessary to have healthy nuclear families which would ensure a future generation of vigorous law-abiding citizens. It did not take long before sociologists proclaimed that the institution was in a state of decline. Part of the problem was due to immigrant women who were leaving the home and working in morally depraved factories and textile mills, thus neglecting their duties as wives and mothers. Most of the problem, however, was due to "native stock" women who were putting individualistic careers ahead of procreation for the race. Since the success or failure of the family as an institution was judged on the basis of its service to the state, the sin of the second group of women was indeed serious. Speaker after speaker at the 1909 conference indicated that something would have to be done about the inefficient "native stock" women who were having only one or two children when immigrant women were bearing three or four. From all indications, it was higher education that caused this selfish individualism. There was little ambivalence among sociologists about the proper role for women. The woman's place was in the home, and the increasing number of individualistic career seekers could only cause the downfall of the entire society.

Throughout the conference, participants expressed concern about the declining birth rate of "superior stocks." Immigrant women were far "out producing" "native American" women and this aroused considerable fear among the advocates of control. What would be the future of the race? What would

become of the nation if it were overrun by immigrants? Discussions about liberal education for women were couched in terms of selfish individualism or "questionable biological effects."[49] "It is to the advantage of mankind," stated David Collin Wells of Dartmouth College, for "superior women to become mothers." The present lowered birth rate may be explained by the "incompatibility between motherhood and the gratification of the multifarious tastes and interests of a broadened life."[50] Quoting Munsterberg, Wells argued that

> From whatever side we look at it, the self-assertion of women exalts her at the expense of the family--perfects the individual but injures society, makes the American woman perhaps the flower of civilization, but awakens at the same time serious flaws for the propagation of the race.[51]

The effect of the lowered birth rate concluded Wells, was a "comparative sterilization of presumably superior stocks."[52]

James Hagerty of Ohio State University expressed similar fears. Hagerty was convinced that liberally educated women married later and thus had fewer children. If this reduction in numbers meant an improvement in quality, he would have been willing to accept it. Unfortunately, the available evidence indicated that when highly educated women became mothers their "offspring were not as healthy and vigorous as were those of other classes."[53] The "emancipation of women," according to Hagerty, introduced certain social conditions of questionable value. Education which fostered the "right to self-development, culture and happiness" was the major precipitator of the problem.[54]

The most succinct of the 1909 speakers was Professor U.G. Weatherly of Indiana University. More than anyone else, Weatherly turned to the domestic science curriculum to solve the current crisis of the family. He pointed out that "employment in highly specialized factory or mercantile work weakens

the taste and capacity for domestic management," and in some cases, it even breeds "a positive dislike for it."[55] Citing a study of conditions in Birmingham, he argued that "slack conditions in the home of employed women" tend to cause unsteady and delinquent husbands. "The proportion of sober and steady men," he continued, "is nearly twice as great in families where the wives do not work" as in homes presided over by wives who do.[56]

Weatherly later argued that attention paid to "women who work becuase they must" has deflected all attention from the "unwholesome idleness of those who are not compelled to seek occupation. One of the tragedies of contemporary society is the women who, through lack of occupational interest is chronically sick and inefficient." Much of the marital unrest of the period continued Weatherly, is "traceable to this absence of serious occupational interest among married women of the prosperous classes."[57]

Although he paid lip service to the problems of the poor, Weatherly's main concern was with the inefficient "rich." He was disturbed about the increasing physical strength of immigrant women, and the growing idleness of "native American" women. If allowed to continue, immigrants would soon out-populate "superior stocks." His solution to this problem was the "science of consumption." The pathological family, he suggested, was due to the "one-sided emphasis which modern life placed upon mere crude production." He pointed out that modern society is less effectively organized for the purposes of <u>using</u> its material goods than for the purposes of <u>creating</u> them. According to Weatherly many of our problems stem from the lack of recognition given to the "management of consumption as a validly accredited career."[58] A "science of consumption" would professionalize homemaking and give "superior stock" women a pride in their occupation, thus promoting greater efficiency for the state. The nineteenth century ideal of woman as passive and sickly was quickly falling by the wayside.[59]

In addition to encouraging efficiency among the "rich", training in domestic science would imbue lower class women with proper attitudes and values regarding housekeeping and child-rearing. Too, girls would be convinced of the importance of wifehood and motherhood through the domestic science curriculum and the "problem" of higher education and paid professionalism for women would solve itself. The effect then, of preparing girls for careers in the home would be to keep all women in the home and re-build the pathological family.

By 1911 the ideology of control was well developed. In that year Professor George Elliot Howard, a participant in the 1909 conference, presented a paper to the ASS entitled "The Social Control of Domestic Relations." Howard advocated state control of "the trinity of institutions, marriage, family, and the home" as well as the "internal and external relations between the father, mother and child."[60] "The home economist and sociologist," he argued, "were presently joining hands in the earnest effort to create better methods of home building and higher ideals of family living." "Is it not high time," he asked, that we "construct a scientific program for the promotion of the right social control of domestic relations? The 'Municipal Program' worked out by experts several years ago has borne good fruit." What was needed, argued Howard, was a "Household Program" along the same lines; a "new system of education, broad enough and intensive enough to provide efficient training for the business, the obligations, and the domestic relations of the household."[61] It was this notion, and the assumptions which underlie it regarding "woman's place," that brought the interests of the sociologists, home economists, and educators together. Significantly, it was the social control argument that was picked up by the NEA and used to justify the inclusion of home economics in the high school curriculum. It is to this issue that I now turn.

The Views of the Educators

Around 1909, NEA speakers began to devote considerable attention to the question of girls' education.[62] The ambivalence which characterized the early vocational educators with respect to the education of girls was almost completely gone. Educators were largely convinced that the only place for women was in the home and that the duties of "housewifery" necessitated systematic training.

In 1909 Albert Salisbury, President of the State Normal School, Whitewater, Wisconsin, addressed the NEA. He began his firey speech by stating that "our civilization is essentially a civilization of homes, not of harems or caravanansaries, but of families, each with its own separate domicile and domestic circle." For this reason, he continued, whatever "menaces the home menaces our civilization itself. Whatever exalts and betters the home is of vital importance to the nation."[63] The chief problem of the home is the problem of women; of her "daily employment and her attitude toward domestic life." As he states:

> If any preponderant or even considerable share of civilized women become imbued with the idea that domestic life is 'slow', that marriage is unnecessary or even undesirable, then we must recognize that the foundations of our social system are already crumbling.[64]

With great moral rectitude, Salisbury announced that "whatever tends to make woman man's competitor instead of his complement, whatever tends to make woman less disposed toward the career of homemaker, is not a safe or fit thing to be taught in the public schools of the nation."[65] Salisbury closed his address by strongly advocating the inclusion of home economics in the high school curriculum.

In 1912, Lorenzo D. Harvey, President of the Stout Institute, Menomenie, Wisconsin, delivered a major address to the NEA on the subject

of girls' education. Acknowledging that women are not necessarily intellectually inferior to men, he began his address by pointing out that girls have indeed demonstrated their ability to achieve success in the highest fields of educational effort. But, he stated, "the settlement of that question has not settled the other--whether the girl needs and should have the same education as a boy."[66] Harvey's own answer to the second question was an emphatic "no." He declared that an "adequate differentiation of the materials, means and methods to be employed in the education of girls and boys has yet to be made." For years, he stated, we have been multiplying

> special, technical, and professional schools of varying aim and scope to fit boys and young men for the active duties of life...This immense broadening of the field of educational effort for men is not an accident. It has come because we have been studying the needs of the individual, of society and of the state. We have been finding out what a man needed to know and do in order to measure up to these demands, and have been framing courses of instruction to more definitely fit men to do this work.[67]

In Harvey's opinion, this was precisely what needed to be done in the development of a curriculum for girls. "What a boy needs to know...to fit him for success in any of the useful activities of life upon which he desires to enter," declared Harvey, "is the basic element in determining the character of his education. What a woman needs to know and do in order to meet the responsibilities that come to her in her life" must be the "basic element in determining what her education shall be as well."[68] Under the title of "activity" or "job analysis," this idea was later popularized by Bobbitt, Snedden, and Charters, and was used to design the curriculum of Stephens College.[69]

By around 1912, the rhetoric of social control had thoroughly captured the advocates of domestic science in the high school. The inclusion of home economics, argued its proponents, would ensure that women remain in the home, thus ensuring that the future of the family, race and state would be secure. Harvey concluded his 1912 address on this note:

> The woman is the homemaker; the wide range of activities demanded of her in this field of effort, the vital importance of these activities to all concerned demand special preparation which she is not now receiving. The welfare of society, the well-being of the nation depend upon the efficiency of the woman in the home, and that efficiency depends upon special education for such efficiency.[70]

Thus the place of home economics in the high school curriculum was assured.

Conclusion

This paper has traced the rhetoric of the inclusion of home economics in the high school curriculum. I have argued that the inclusion of domestic science is linked to a broader movement toward differentiation and specialization by race, social class, and gender, as well as to broader fears of "race suicide" and discussions of "woman's place" in the new industrial order.

A critical issue at the turn of the century was woman's role in urban America. Was she to work in the factories as many immigrant women were doing, or to lie idle and sickly as ideal nineteenth century women did? Was she to obtain higher education and enter one of the professions, or to make housekeeping her full-time occupation? The point is that women were doing all of these things at the turn of the century and this caused considerable alarm.

According to numerous "experts," the very future of the nation depended upon the successful resolution of the "woman problem." The family was in a "state of decline," and the falling White Anglo-Saxon Protestant birth rate

was tantamount to "race suicide." "Superior stock" women who opted for either individualistic careers or nineteenth century frailty were roundly criticized. The birth rate for whites shrank by half between 1800 and 1900, and the drop was most strongly felt among White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.[71] Nineteenth century romanticization of sickness had meant the lowering of "superior stock" birth rates, since the twin pillars of nineteenth century femininity--sickness and reproduction--were not necessarily compatible.[72] Additionally, those women who were not sick often pursued higher education and the birth rate was falling most noticeably among the college educated. This led G. Stanley Hall to conclude that colleges were good for women, assuming that they were supposed to train "those who do not marry or if they are to educate for celibacy."[73] In the meantime blacks and immigrants were reproducing prolifically. Falling birth rates among "superior stock" women were linked to female invalidism as well as individualistic tendencies which caused women to put college and career before procreation.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, sociologists, home economists, and educators saw the "science of consumption" as a solution to the "woman problem" and strongly advocated its inclusion in the high school curriculum. Home economics would save the family: it would teach immigrant women how to properly care for their homes and Americanize their children; and at the same time it would professionalize homemaking and give "good stock" women pride in their occupation, thus curbing tendencies toward frailty and individualism. The rhetoric of domestic science is that it would save all.

It is important to recognize that the inclusion of home economics in the schools was an attempt to track women <u>out of the paid labor force and into unpaid homemaking</u>. This has broader implications than mere arresting of "race suicide." The rise of corporate capitalism meant that nineteenth

century economic autonomy was gradually being eroded. Increasing numbers of men were losing their autonomy and being allocated to low level positions in the new industrial order. Tracking women into unpaid housework served to re-eatablish male dominance in the home. It thus functioned as a trade-off: men lost autonomy in the work place but regained control of the household through the re-establishment of patriarchical relations.[74]

Teaching the principles of home economics would also curb labor unrest. If women were taught to run a household "scientifically," men's wages presumably would be sufficient to cover the cost of operating a home. This would reduce tendencies toward demands from labor and ultimately maximize profit for the corporate capitalists. In addition to combatting "race suicide," solving the "woman problem" would allow for the growth of American capitalism.

It is my suggestion that the inclusion of home economics is linked to broader issues of "race suicide" and profit maximization. If I am correct in my analysis, then we should find pressure from the industrialists to include the course. Future research must carefully explore the linkage between the industrialists and the "experts" who advocated domestic science on the floor of the NEA and ASS. We must also look at the response to national rhetoric on the local level. Case studies of course inclusion in selected cities would go a long way toward unpacking the nexus of relationships between curricular formation and broader socio-economic concerns. It is also important to know who opposed the inclusion of home economics and why they took the stand that they did.

My findings suggest that the spread of industrialization does not necessarily lead to increased options in social and economic life for women. Others have made this point through the study of work force

statistics. They have attributed the lack of increased options to capitalist forms of industrialization, suggesting that if industrialization proceeded along socialist lines, the limitation of women's roles would not occur.[75] Before one can make this argument however, one would need to compare the role of women in both socialist and non-socialist economies at different stages of industrialization. One might ask for instance, whether the same attempt to track women into unpaid homemaking through schools occurred in places like Cuba and the Soviet Union. In this way we would be able to ascertain whether gender differentiation in education is totally a function of capitalist industrialization, or whether other forms of economic and social organization and their schools limit choices for women as well.

1. Ellen A. Richards, "Domestic Science as a Synthetic Study for Girls," Addresses and Proceedings of the National Educational Association, 1898 (Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1898), p. 769. (These volumes are referred to in subsequent notes as NEA with the appropriate years.)

2. Richards, p. 769.

3. Richards, p. 769.

4. Richards, p. 769.

5. Perla G. Powman, "Discussion of Richards Paper," NEA, 1898, p. 773.

6. Bowman, p. 773.

7. This survey was conducted by Charles Eliot, then President of Harvard University. The findings are reported in Edward Krug, The Shaping of the American High School 1880-1920 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), pp. 48-51.

8. George S. Counts, The Senior High School Curriculum (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1926), p. 16.

9. See Marvin Lazerson, Origins of the Urban School (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. xi; and Robert Wiebe, The Search for Order 1877-1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

10. Lazerson, p. xi.

11. Oscar Handlin, "The Modern City as a Field of Historical Study," in Oscar Handlin and John Burchard, The Historian and the City (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1963), as cited in Lazerson, p. xi.

12. For a discussion of these points, see Krug,and Lazerson.

13. See Lazerson, p. xi.

14. According to the Commissioner's Statistics in the 1889-1890 Report, 57.6 percent of the public school pupils, and 64.8 percent of the graduates were girls. The private secondary schools showed about equal numbers. Commissioner of Education, Report for the year 1889-1890 (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Education, 1889-1890), pp. 1388-1389, as cited in Krug, pp. 11-12.

15. See Krug, pp. 190-216.

16. Krug, pp. 39-65.

17. It is commonly acknowledged that the high school population greatly changed in character around the turn of the century. More and more students kept coming to the high schools and the number of new schools increased in about the same ratio as the pupils. See Krug, p. 178.

18. Katherine Dopp, "Forms and Limitations of Handwork for Girls in the High School," NEA, 1905, p. 585.

19. Dopp, p. 586.

20. Dopp, p. 586.

21. Lazerson, pp. ix-x.

22. Lazerson, p. 133.

23. Report of the Massachusetts Commission on Industrial and Technical Education (Boston: The Commission, 1906), p. 4; as cited in Krug, p. 220.

24. Report of the Massachusetts Commission, pp. 18-19, as cited in Krug, p. 220.

25. Report of the Massachusetts Commission, p. 14, as cited in Krug, pp. 219-220.

26. Krug, pp. 220-221.

27. See Krug and Joel Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).

28. John J. Marrinan, "Vocational Education for the Rural School," Educational Review (June 1913): 40, as cited in Krug, p. 217.

29. Burks is talking about the 7th and 8th grades, which are soon to become the junior high school as a result of this type of pressure. Jesse D. Burks, "Can the School Life of Pupils Be Prolonged by an Adequate Provision for Industrial Training in the Upper Grammar Grades?" NEA, 1907, p. 789.

30. Burks, p. 792.

31. Burks, p. 792.

32. Burks, p. 792-3.

33. Advocates of differentiation continued to emphasize the presumed needs of different social groups. It was easy to slide into identifying the non-college preparatory track for example, with lower socio-economic groups. Differentiation also involved different ethnic and racial groups. The Superintendent of San Antonio proposed to develop an educational program adapted to the abilities, traits and needs of each of three races in the city. See Krug, p. 321.

34. Burks, p. 795.

35. Henry C. Morrison, "Vocational Training and Industrial Education," Educational Review (October 1908): 242, as cited in Krug, p. 225.

36. Anna J. Hamilton, "What Kind of Education is Best Suited for Girls?" 50th Anniversary Volume of the NEA, 1907, p. 68.

37. Hamilton, p. 68-69.

38. My italics. For an excellent discussion of the production metaphor as it relates to the field of curriculum, see Herbert Kliebard, "Bureaucracy and Curriculum Theory," in Vernon Haubrich, ed., Freedom, Bureaucracy and Schooling (Washington, D.C.: ASCD, 1971), pp. 74-94. Sarah Louise Arnold, Dean of Simmons College, advances an argument similar to Hamilton's at the 1908 meeting of the NEA. See Sarah Louise Arnold, "The Reconcilement of Cross Purposes in the Education of Women," NEA, 1908, pp. 93-99.

39. Lazerson provides an excellent example of the contradiction involved in vocational education for women. Massachusetts educators designed a dressmaking course in the hope of merging vocational opportunities and familial responsibilities. Committment to the home however, prevented any true assessment of the industry which was undergoing extensive change at the time. See Lazerson, pp. 173-175.

40. See Krug, p. 249.

41. For an excellent discussion of the social efficiency movement in education, see Krug, pp. 249-283, 304-377.

42. See Krug, pp. 249-255 for an in-depth discussion of the ideology of social control in education.

43. In making this statement, I am consistent with Krug's interpretation. Karier has argued that Dewey works from the perspective of social control. See Clarence Karier, "Liberalism and the Quest for Orderly Change," History of Education Quarterly, XII, 1 (Spring 1972): 51-80.

44. John Dewey, The School and the Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1899), p. 40, as cited in Krug, p. 255.

45. The statement "economical system of police" comes from Ross. See Edward A. Ross, Social Control (New York: The MaMillan Company, 1905), p. 174, as cited in Krug, p. 252.

46. For an excellent discussion of the "women question" see Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, For Her Own Good (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1978).

47. I do not mean to imply in this section that sociologists were unified as to their perspective on the family. I do suggest that the view presented here was dominant and most often in print.

48. Prince A. Morrow, "The Relation of Social Diseases to the Family." Papers and Proceedings of the American Sociological Society, 1909 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909), p. 46. (These volumes are hereafter referred to as ASS with the appropriate year.)

49. The phrase, "questionable biological effects" is used by D. Collin Wells, "Some Questions Concerning the Higher Education of Women," ASS, 1909, p. 122; and James Hagerty, "How Far Should Members of the Family Be Individualized?" ASS, 1909, p. 194.

50. Wells, p. 120.

51. Munsterberg, The Americans, p. 583, as quoted in Wells, p. 120.

52. Wells, p. 120.

53. Hagerty, p. 184.

54. Hagerty, p. 183-184.

55. U. G. Weatherly, "How Does the Access of Women to Industrial Occupations React in the Family?" ASS, 1909, p. 129.

56. Weatherly, p. 129.

57. Weatherly, p. 131-133.

58. Weatherly, p. 135.

59. For a discussion of the nineteenth century ideal, see Martha Vicinus, ed., Suffer and Be Still (Bloomington: The University of Indiana Press, 1972); and Ehrenreich and English.

60. George Eliot Howard, "Social Control of the Domestic Relations," ASS, 1911, p. 212.

61. Howard, p. 213.

62. I do not know the extent to which there was overlapping attendance at the ASS and NEA meetings during this time period. This is an important question for future researchers to ask.

63. Albert Salisbury, "Influences of Industrial Arts and Sciences Upon Rural and City Home Life: From the Standpoint of Economic Interests," NEA, 1909, p. 640.

64. Salisbury, p. 640.

65. Salisbury, p. 643.

66. Lorenzo D. Harvey, "The Education of Girls," NEA, 1912, p. 425.

67. Harvey, p. 426.

68. Harvey, p. 426.

69. See Kliebard for a discussion of "job analysis" in the field of curriculum.

70. Harvey, p. 430.

71. See Ehrenreich and English, p. 121-122.

72. Ehrenreich and English, pp. 120-126.

73. G. Stanley Hall, Adolescence, Vol. II (New York: D. Appleton, 1905), p. 579, as cited in Ehrenreich and English, p. 122.

74. This argument is advanced by Gail P. Kelly with respect to the resettlement of Vietnamese in the 1970's. See Gail P. Kelly, "Schooling, Gender and the Reshaping of Occupational and Social Expectations: The Case of Vietnamese Immigrants to the United States," International Journal of Women's Studies 1, 4 (July/August 1978), p. 323-325.

75. See Elsa Chaney and Marianne Schmink, "Women and Modernization: Access to Tools" in June Nash and Helen I. Saja, Sex and Class in Latin America (New York: Praeger, 1975), pp. 160-182; Norma S. Chinchilla, "Industrialization, Monopoly Capitalism and Women's Work in Guatemala," Signs, Vol. 3. No. 1 (Autumn 1977), pp. 38-66; Glaura Vesqueses de Miranda, "Women's Labor Force Participation in Developing Society," Signs, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Autumn 1977), pp. 261-274; Remi Clignet, "Social Change and Sexual Differentiation in the Camerouns and the Ivory Ccast," Signs, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Autumn 1977), pp. 244-260; Nadia Haggag Yousseff, Women and Work in Developing Societies (Berkeley: University of California Institute of International Studies, 1974).